

**STAR**  
REFRAME RUSHVILLE  
**WARS**

**JULY 6 - JULY 10**

# JESUS REFRAMES

## HOW WE REACH GOD

MONDAY, JULY 6, 2015

Or imagine a woman who has ten coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and scour the house, looking in every nook and cranny until she finds it? And when she finds it you can be sure she'll call her friends and neighbors: 'Celebrate with me! I found my lost coin!' Count on it—that's the kind of party God's angels throw every time one lost soul turns to God." - Luke 15:8-10

### PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN

Generally, when we want something, we go out and get it—or at least look for it. We decide. We choose. We pursue. But when it comes to Jesus and his love for us, he isn't sitting in heaven wondering if we'll come knocking. Jesus pursues us. Like the most intense chase scene from the movies or like the priceless treasure that you can't be without, he has reframed how we reach God—by reaching out to us.

Luke Skywalker was not looking to save the universe with the help of the Force. He was in the midst of another normal day on Tatooine when a droid he fixed all of a sudden delivered an S.O.S. message from Princess Leia about Obi Wan Kenobi. Because Luke chose not to ignore this message that was seemingly unrelated to him and his future, he began the amazing journey toward peace.

This unexpected message put him into a deeper relationship with Ben Kenobi, who introduced Luke to the history and power of the Force. His journeys led him into new friendships and opportunities to help. The more he learned about the power of the Force, the more he learned about how to put that power to use for good through his own hands.

Lives were saved, evil plans were thwarted, and Luke discovered the true nature of his identity. None of this happened because Luke was looking for it. He did not know what the Force even was, let alone have any desire



To seek it out. All of this goodness, work and power found him. Princess Leia called out for Kanobe, but Luke became her rescuer.

## **DISTURBANCE IN THE FORCE**

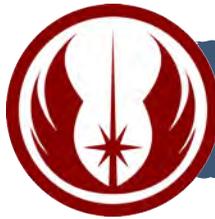
The cries for help from the people of Rushville, Indiana to God may seem like they don't have anything to do with us or our future. But by not ignoring this S.O.S. message and seeking out this God (like Luke sought out Kanobe), we are all called into an amazing journey toward peace that will change us and the world around us.

This cry for help from Rushville puts us into deeper relationships with God, our leaders and each other, as we help each other to better understand God and the way God works for good. This journey has led to new friendships and new opportunities to help. The more we learn about the power of God, the more we learn about how that power is put to use for good through our own hands. Our sisters and brothers have called out to God, but friends like you and me can become God's way of helping and rescuing them.

Lives will be saved. Destructive forces of poverty and oppression will be thwarted. We will all discover more about the true nature of our identity. None of this has happened because we were looking for it. All of this goodness, good work and power to make a difference have found us. God is a force that is always surging through the world in search of us.

## **USE THE FORCE**

The Force needed Luke to be found. His identity, gifts and heart were essential to what had to be done for the sake of peace in the universe. He could have ignored all of this, but chose to respond. God needs us to be found. Our identity, gifts and hearts are essential to what needs to be done for the sake of peace in our town, nation and world. There is great celebration when we allow ourselves to be found and used by God for God's purposes (repent) rather than hide from God or ignore God's guidance.



**MAY THE FORCE  
BE WITH YOU**

**Why did you make the decision to participate in Work Camp?**

**Why does God need you to participate in Work Camp?**

**What are you in search of this week?**

**How can we repent this week – turn our lives and heart to focus upon God, and to listen for God's guidance?**

# JESUS REFRAMES

## WHO YOU REALLY ARE

TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2015

Passing along, Jesus saw a man at his work collecting taxes. His name was Matthew. Jesus said, "Come along with me." Matthew stood up and followed him. Later when Jesus was eating supper at Matthew's house with his close followers, a lot of disreputable characters came and joined them. When the Pharisees saw him keeping this kind of company, they had a fit, and lit into Jesus' followers. "What kind of example is this from your Teacher, acting cozy with crooks and riffraff?" Jesus, overhearing, shot back, "Who needs a doctor: the healthy or the sick? Go figure out what this Scripture means: 'I'm after mercy, not religion.' I'm here to invite outsiders, not coddle insiders."

-Mathew 9:9-13



### YOU RANG?

Matthew, one of Jesus' 12 disciples, went on to spread the news of Jesus to a giant portion of the world, wrote the book of Matthew, and died a martyr for his faith—but he didn't start out that way. He was a despised tax collector and ran in circles with "sinners". But Jesus didn't see Matthew the way he was. Jesus reframed Matthew based on how he was created to be: a friend and follower of the Savior.

Han Solo was a crook and a bounty hunter. He worked for and kept the company of some pretty unsavory characters like Jaba the Hut. He was not an obvious choice to join in the movement to rescue the Princess and save the galaxy. But Obi Wan Kenobe saw something in Han Solo that even Han did not see in himself. Despite his past troubles and bad reputation, Obi Wan recruited Han Solo and Chewbacca to escort them along their journey in the Millenium Falcon.

As their journey unfolded, Han helped them to rescue Leia from the Death Star, to destroy the Death Star, destroy the second Death Star at the Battle of Endor, and to create the New Republic – a galactic alliance for the sake of peace. With the guidance of the Force, Han became known by the world as far more than a crook and a bounty hunter. He became known as a loyal friend, a friend of the Force, and an agent of galactic peace.



**MAY THE FORCE  
BE WITH YOU**

## **PUNCH IT!**

Sometimes it is tempting to think that our lack of spiritual understanding, our imperfection, or the imperfection of our friends makes us someone that God could not or would not ask to help for God's sake. We may not feel like we are worthy or qualified to help God, but God sees something in us that we may not even be able to see ourselves. Despite our imperfection, God can and does use us all to do big things for God's sake!

As our lives unfold, God can use us to help those in need of rescue, to work against seemingly undefeatable enemies like poverty, oppression and hate, and to make the world a more peaceful place. With God's guidance, we can become known by the world as far more than our mistakes. We can become known as loyal friends, friends of God, and agents of peace.

**Do you ever feel like you have to earn the invitation to help God? Why?**

**Do we ever judge others as being people that God wants nothing to do with? Why?**

**How can God use you this week to help and to inspire others? How will the world be more peaceful because of you?**

**What do you want to be "when you grow up"? How can God use your life to make the world a more peaceful place?**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 2015

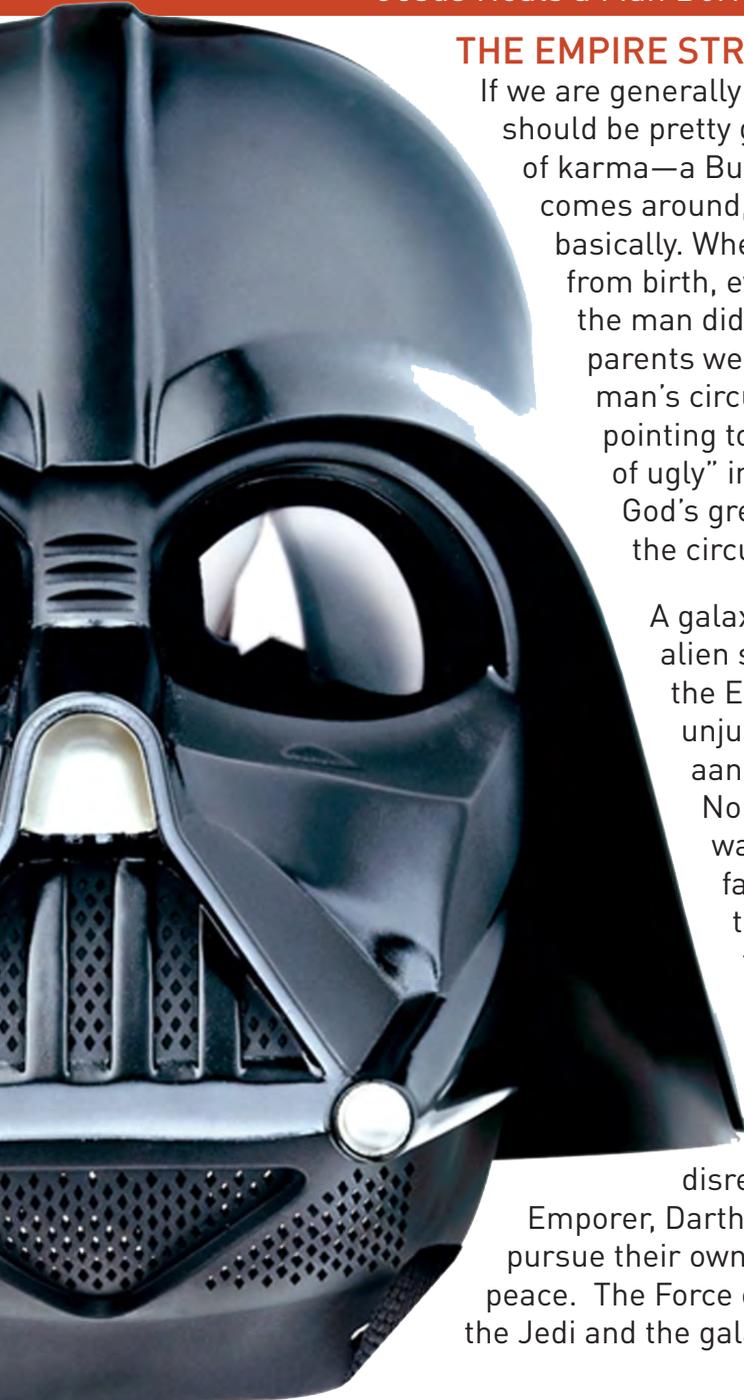
Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind - John 9:1-34

## THE EMPIRE STRIKES

If we are generally nice people and do good things, life should be pretty good, right? That's the basic principle of karma—a Buddhist belief that “what goes around comes around,” that you get what you deserve, basically. When Jesus healed a man who was blind from birth, everyone wanted to know if something the man did caused this “punishment,” or if his parents were to blame. Jesus reframed that man's circumstances by ignoring blame and pointing to how He intended to make “beauty out of ugly” in the man's life—to show everyone God's great power to change lives, no matter the circumstances.

A galaxy full of people (and countless other alien species) suffered under the weight of the Empire. Luke's aunt and uncle were unjustly killed. The entire planet of Alderaan was obliterated by the Death Star. None of this was deserved. None of this was karma. Countless innocents were faced with oppression and death, which they did not deserve. The Emperor and the other leaders of the Empire held great wealth, power and authority, which they did not deserve.

The Force did not make these circumstances the reality. It was a disregard for the Force that allowed the Emperor, Darth Vader and all of their minions to pursue their own self-interest instead of galactic peace. The Force only and always surged in and through the Jedi and the galaxy for the sake of peace. In the end,



the efforts of the Empire and its leaders to disregard and disrupt the force were defeated. In the end, the Force overcame the unfairness and injustice. In the end, the Force brought about peace.

## SO BE IT, JEDI

It is tempting to believe that the imperfection and the sufferings of lives in this world are punishment. It is often easier to assume that God causes the bad rather than to have the complex and convicting conversation about how we (humanity) have caused the bad in our own lives by disregarding or disrupting God's work and guidance.

The struggles we face in our own lives are not our fault, nor are they God's doing. We did not earn them as punishment. We do not deserve them. The poverty and struggle of the people of Rushville is not their fault, nor is it God's doing. They did not earn their struggles as punishment. They do not deserve them. Jesus teaches us that God only and always is at work for good in our lives and peace in all Creation.

The answer to "why do bad things happen" is complicated and beyond our grasp. Sometimes in seemingly insignificant ways and sometimes in big and obvious ways, our every decision and action has an impact on the rest of the world around us. Maybe we choose to buy another shirt instead of share that with those in need. Maybe we buy a shirt that was made overseas by a child in abusive conditions. Maybe we choose to build a Death Star and take over the universe.

All of the ways (big and small) that we do things based on what we want rather than listening for what God would have us do or say add up. We intentionally and unintentionally ignore or hurt others, causing all the bad in humanity. God doesn't cause any of the bad. We do, by not living according to God's will and guidance.

But the good news is that we can always turn back to God for guidance. We can always choose to use the Force rather than disregard it, trusting that in the end, God will help humanity to overcome unfairness, injustice and all the other harm we have caused ourselves. We can trust that God hasn't caused any of the struggle, but is working for us and through us for the sake of good – only and always, God is causing good.



**MAY THE FORCE  
BE WITH YOU**

**Have you ever felt like God was punishing you with negative circumstances? What actually caused them?**

**If God didn't cause the struggles for your Rushville families, what has? What attitudes and norms?**

**How is God a force for good in your life? Who is God using for the sake of good things in your life?**

**How is God a force for good in the life of your Rushville families? How is God using YOU for good?**

# JESUS REFRAMES

## YOUR PAST

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2015

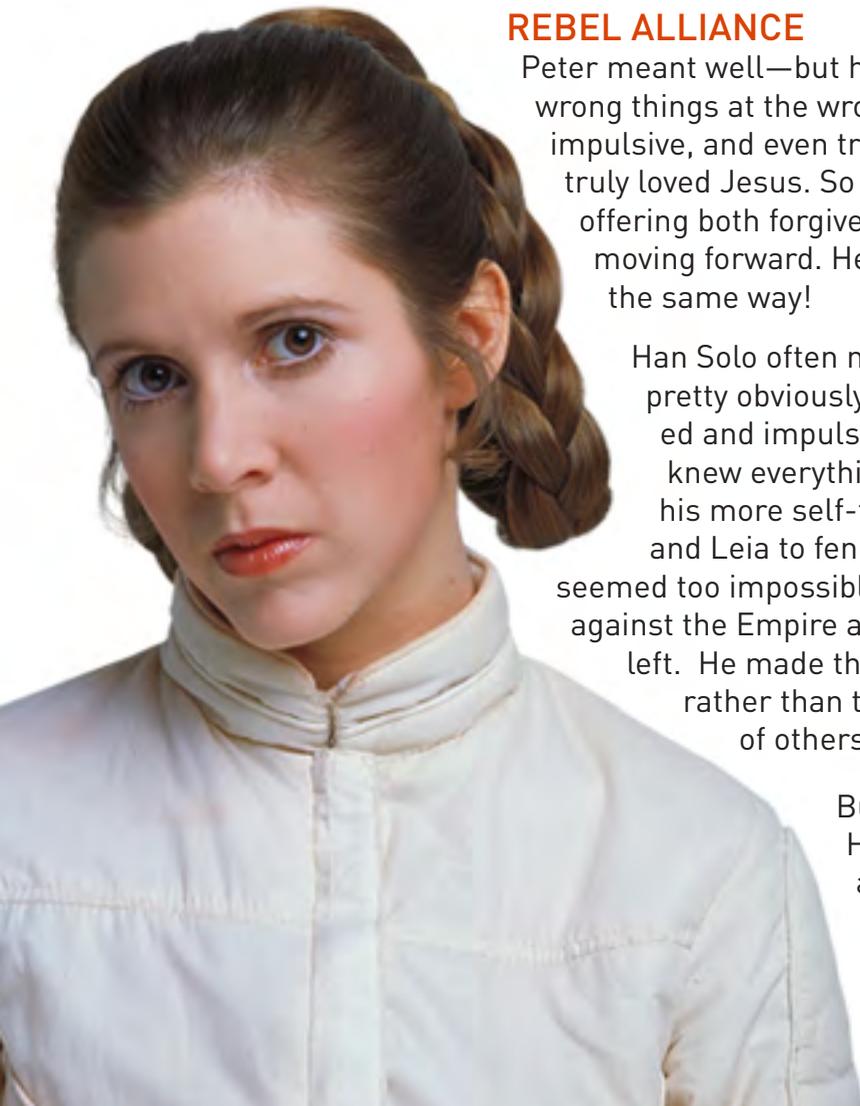
...Peter was upset that he asked for the third time, “Do you love me?” so he answered, “Master, you know everything there is to know. You’ve got to know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. I’m telling you the very truth now: When you were young you dressed yourself and went wherever you wished, but when you get old you’ll have to stretch out your hands while someone else dresses you and takes you where you don’t want to go.” He said this to hint at the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. And then he commanded, “Follow me.”  
- John 21:15-18

### REBEL ALLIANCE

Peter meant well—but he kept messing up. He said the wrong things at the wrong time, was hot-headed and impulsive, and even tried to correct Jesus. Yet, Peter truly loved Jesus. So Jesus reframed Peter’s past by offering both forgiveness and an incredible purpose moving forward. He wants to reframe your past in the same way!

Han Solo often meant well – but often was pretty obviously imperfect. He was hot-headed and impulsive, and often thought that he knew everything about everything. In one of his more self-focused moments, he left Luke and Leia to fend for themselves. It just seemed too impossible and too dangerous to go up against the Empire and the Death Star, and so he left. He made the choice to look out for himself rather than to do what he could for the sake of others.

But eventually Han came back! He had grown to care for Luke and Leia and wanted to do a good thing. He showed up in time to help Luke destroy the Death Star and to save countless lives from its powers of



destruction. When they had safely landed and were out of their ships, Luke was not mad at Han for leaving in the first place. He did not hold that moment of imperfection against him. Luke embraced him as a friend while crying out, "I knew you'd come back! I just knew it." Leia looked at Han and said, "I knew there was more to you than money." Moving forward, Han made many more mistakes, but continued to be a friend and a trusted partner in the quest for peace.

## IMPERFECTION

In a moment of imperfection, Peter denied knowing Jesus. Jesus was being unfairly tortured and killed, and Peter was afraid that Jesus' friends would be at risk of the same. We can understand Peter's hesitancy to speak up. This didn't change the way that Jesus felt about Peter. He did not hold it against him. He knew Peter's heart and had faith in him, despite the mistakes he made.

In our moments of imperfection, we often choose to look out for ourselves or to do what we want instead of doing what God would have us do for the sake of something bigger than ourselves. But we must always remember that God does not hold these moments against us. God does not stay mad about them. When we repent and turn back to God's guidance and will, God is always waiting to embrace us while saying, "I knew you'd come back! I know there is more to you than just doing what you want for yourself."

We are always forgiven! So let us never forget that as we move forward, God will always continue to consider us a friend and a trusted partner in the quest for peace.



## MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU

Have you ever chosen what you want instead of what God wants? How did you feel about that?

How is guilt helpful for a brief moment? How can God use that moment?

If God is always forgiving and ready to embrace us as friends, should guilt hang around for more than a moment? Why or why not?

If Han had continued to feel guilty about running away instead of letting that guilt go, how might that have affected his friendships with Luke and Leia?

How does guilt stand in the way of our friendships with God and each other?

God is embracing you. Will you leave the past behind and move forward as a friend and trusted partner in the quest for peace?

# JESUS REFRAMES

## YOUR FUTURE

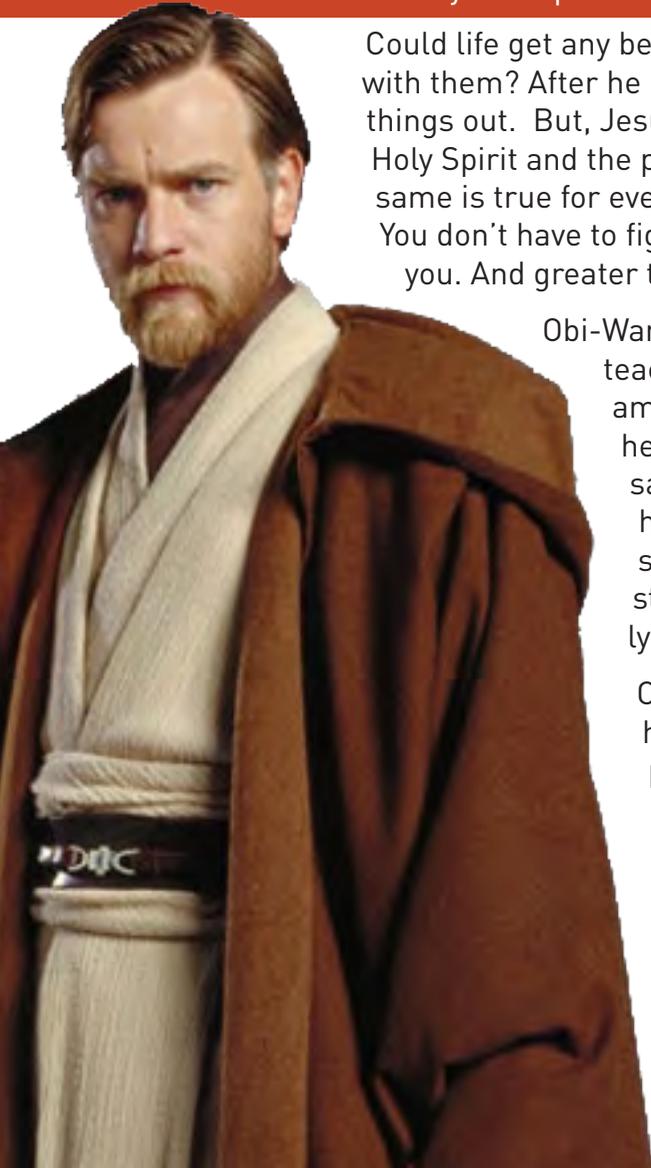
FRIDAY, JULY 10, 2015

“Believe me: I am in my Father and my Father is in me. If you can’t believe that, believe what you see—these works. The person who trusts me will not only do what I’m doing but even greater things, because I, on my way to the Father, am giving you the same work to do that I’ve been doing. You can count on it. From now on, whatever you request along the lines of who I am and what I am doing, I’ll do it. That’s how the Father will be seen for who he is in the Son. I mean it. Whatever you request in this way, I’ll do. -John 14:12

Could life get any better for the disciples than when Jesus was with them? After he left them, they’d be on their own to figure things out. But, Jesus reframed their future, giving them the Holy Spirit and the promise of even greater things to come. The same is true for every person who has a relationship with Jesus. You don’t have to figure things out on your own, Jesus is with you. And greater things are coming!

Obi-Wan Kenobi was Luke’s trusted and beloved teacher. Luke not only witnessed Obi-Wan do amazing things with the help of the Force, but he also learned from Obi-Wan how to do those same things. He learned that the Force could help him to see beyond what his eyes could see, to have strength beyond his own strength, and to have victory against seemingly impossible odds.

Obi-Wan’s strength and mastery of the Force helped the team to begin their quest for peace, but his life was cut short when Darth Vader killed him unjustly. Luke was heart-broken, and right after Kenobi was killed, he didn’t think that they would be able to accomplish what they set out to accomplish without his teacher and master. But Kenobi knew something all along that Luke eventually learned – Luke and the rest of the team would have the help of the Force to carry on the mission.



With the lessons learned from Obi-Wan and the help of the Force, Luke and the team were able to destroy the Death Star and stop the senseless destruction of so many innocent lives. As the Star Wars story unfolds, Leia, Luke and the rest of the Alliance are helped by the Force to defeat the Emperor, Darth Vader, and the entire Empire. They accomplished greater things than Obi-Wan, the master and teacher. A new republic of peace is formed, and it was the Force that helped it all to become.

## HOPE

When Jesus was unjustly killed, the disciples were not only heartbroken, but felt defeated. They did not see how they could possibly continue this movement to bring justice and peace unto all the world without Jesus, their teacher and master. But Jesus knew something they eventually learned – the disciples of every time and place (including us) have the help of God's Holy Spirit surging in and all around us.

The Holy Spirit helps us to see beyond what our eyes can see, to have strength beyond our own strength, and to have victory over and against seemingly impossible odds. As we look forward to our future, we trust that we can accomplish even greater things than Jesus.

No, we cannot turn water into wine, heal the blind or bring the dead back to life. But let us consider what Jesus' followers are capable of accomplishing. Jesus' followers helped to overcome the oppression of the Roman Empire, and countless other oppressive empires and dictators over the last two thousand years. Jesus' followers have helped to end the practice of legalized

slavery around the world. We have helped to advance the cause for women's rights, and equal rights for minorities and other unjustly oppressed peoples.

We have helped to bring food and clean water to billions of the most needy neighbors in this world. We have accomplished more and greater things than Jesus was able to accomplish in his three years of ministry, and this is only the beginning. There is far more work to be done with the help of God's Forceful Spirit. Our future – as individuals and as a community of faith – will be guided by the Force if we allow it to be. Let us all focus and listen carefully for that guidance, and as we do, let us be amazed at what God helps us to accomplish!



**MAY THE FORCE  
BE WITH YOU**

**How did the lessons of Obi-Wan guide Luke? How do Jesus' lessons guide us? How does being part of the Church community help us learn these lessons?**

**How did the Force guide Luke and the team? How does God's Spirit guide us? How does being part of the Church community help us to focus on the Forceful Spirit?**

**How can your future be committed to helping the world become what God longs it to become? How is this different from "being religious?"**



Faith Workcamps is thrilled to be attending its 24th camp this year in Rushville, IN! Be sure to stay up-to-date with all of the workcamp happenings by checking out our daily video blog, photos, and twitter feed at FaithWorkcamps.com. We'd love to hear from you, so please feel free to leave us a comment on the blogs or reply to us via Facebook or Twitter. We look forward to sharing our experiences with you both online and after we return!

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

## 2015 / RUSHVILLE, IN

- |                    |                 |                     |                  |                |
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| Carolyn Baittinger | Jenna Gross     | Greg Leinweber      | Leigh Moring     | Dorothy Smits  |
| Joanna Baittinger  | Jessica Hartman | Nick Leinweber      | Platte Moring    | Harvey Trop    |
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| John Barabas       | Dan Hemberger   | Eric Lillegard      | Brett Moss       | Kelly Trop     |
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